

October 8, 2002

Chairman Welch, Commissioner Nugent, Commissioner Diamond
Public Utilities Commission
18 State House Station
242 State Street
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Chairman Welch and Commissioners Nugent and Diamond:

Please accept this letter as the Department of Education's request for \$2.25 million to support the Maine Learning Technology Initiative for Fiscal Year 2003. The Commission, by order issued on September 14, 2001, agreed to provide such support from the Maine Telecommunications Access Fund. (See Attachment 1)

The Department has entered into an agreement with Apple Computer to provide a full education productivity suite to our middle school teachers and students. This capacity includes training, computers; servers, network administration; wireless networks and cards, software, as well as other items.

The contract between the State and Apple is for \$37.2 million over four years, although the costs to the vendor significantly exceed that amount. Based on the descriptions contained in the Final Report of the Task Force on Maine Learning Technology Endowment (see Attachment 2), DOE has identified the following services and materials as eligible for support from MSLN/MTEAF over four years:

Internal School Networks

Wireless cards	36,045	\$91	\$3,280,095
Base Stations	2,650	\$269	\$712,850
Wireless Network Installation	239	\$9,000	\$2,151,000

External Network

Routers			\$60,000
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Support

Network Operations (Servers)			\$480,000
Technical Support (Help Desk)			\$2,000,000
Technical Training			\$300,000
	Total		\$8,983,945

These numbers are an approximation, as the contract is not broken out by components. In most cases these are conservative estimates or are directly from the company price list. Attachment 3 to this letter describes the specific items the Task Force described as Internal and External Networks and Support and how they are reflected in the actual MLTI project and contract with Apple.

Should you desire more information on these costs, please contact Joanne Steneck (207) 624-6777. I would be pleased to discuss these issues and would bring technical resources from Apple to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

J. Duke Albanese
Commissioner of Education

Attachments

Attachment 3

The Task Force Report contemplated that the MTEAF/MSLN and Federal R-Rate would contribute toward the cost for the categories of internal and external networks and support. Specifically, the Task Force Report (at pages 46-49) assumed the following for each of these categories.

Technical Support - The Task Force Report assumed that Network Support would be performed via MSLN circuit riders and call-in support. It projected 80 hours of help desk call-in support per year per school. It also contemplated that BIS or the university could provide technical support for central servers. Under the Apple contract, Apple provides the help desk function. This is available weekdays from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm and 9:00 am to 9:00 pm on weekends. The servers are located at Kannon Communications. The University of Maine houses the back-up server in Orono, all under contract to Apple. Apple also sponsored a 2-day summer training on getting to know your iBook. This was primarily in the nature of initial technical support for teachers. This will be repeated in the summer of 2003. Approximately 3,000 teachers will attend.

Internal School Networks - The Task Force Report refers to the installation of wireless hubs sufficient to cover all classrooms used by 7th and 8th graders. Under the Apple contract approximately 2,650 wireless hubs have been installed covering all 7th and 8th grade classrooms. In order to use the wireless hubs, Apple has installed a wireless card into each iBook.

External Network - External network connections are being provided by MSLN. The Task Force Report states that some MSLN sites may need connection upgrades due to the laptops. The Department of Education purchased 6 routers to allow 50 schools to upgrade to a T-1 connection.